

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 LONDON 12839

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, UK

SUBJECT REVIEW OF CONSERVATIVE FOREIGN POLICY

REF: LONDON 11593

SUMMARY: CONSERVATIVE SHADOW FOREIGN SECRETARY REGINALD MAUDLING PRESENTED OVERVIEW OF CONSERVATIVE PARTY FOREIGN POLICY IN ARTICLE PRINTED IN THE TIMES AUGUST 18. THE
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ARTICLE IS A TYPICAL MAUDLING PRODUCT, FILLED WITH RAM-

BLING AND EVEN FLACCID STATEMENT OF FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES, IRREPROACHABLE IN CONTENT BUT LACKING IN STYLE AND DYNAMISM. END SUMMARY.

1. IN TYPICAL RAMBLING AND WORDY STYLE, REGINALD MAUDLING, SHADOW FOREIGN SECRETARY FOR THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY, OUTLINED CONSERVATIVE FOREIGN POLICY VIEWS IN TIMES ARTICLE AUGUST 18. TOUCHING ON ALMOST ALL ISSUES IN FOREIGN POLICY ARENA, MAUDLING SHOWED THE PARTY'S LACK OF INTEREST IN DEVELOPING DISTINCTIVE PARTY POLICIES WHICH MIGHT OFFER THE OPPOSITION OPPORTUNITY FOR CALLING A DIVISION WITHIN THE HOUSE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS ISSUES.

2. IN DISCUSSING THE EXTENT OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION, MAUDLING SAID THAT TRADITIONALLY PARTIES HAVE ATTEMPTED TO REACH AGREEMENT ON BRITISH NATIONAL INTERESTS IN DEALINGS WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD. THE DIVISIONS ON THESE ISSUES WHICH EXIST DO NOT LIE SO MUCH BETWEEN THE PARTIES AS BETWEEN THE LEFT AND RIGHT WINGS OF THE LABOR PARTY. AS A RESULT LABOR FOREIGN SECRETARIES IN THE PAST (SINCE BEVIN) HAD BEEN MORE ATTACKED BY THEIR OWN BACKBENCHERS THAN BY THE OPPOSITION. REASON FOR THIS IS THAT LABOR FOREIGN SECRETARIES IN OFFICE HAVE RECOGNIZED TWO BASIC TENETS OF BRITISH SECURITY: BRITISH SECURITY DEPENDS UPON NATO AND UPON THE US IN PARTICULAR, AND ANY THREATS TO BRITISH SECURITY THAT MIGHT ARISE COULD ONLY ARISE FROM THE COMMUNIST CAMP. LEFT WING OF THE LABOR PARTY DOES NOT ACCEPT THESE PRINCIPLES: ON THE LEFT, ANTI-AMERICANISM HAS REPLACED THE OLD TRADITION OF PACIFISM, COMBINING WITH THE "FELLOW TRAVELING SUPPORTERS ON THE LEFT."

3. IN DISCUSSING FUNDAMENTALS OF BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY, MAUDLING CITES DRAMATIC CHANGES IN THE RECENT PAST: LOSS OF EMPIRE AND DECLINE OF GNP WHICH HAVE UNDERMINED BRITISH INFLUENCE; NUCLEAR STALEMATE LEADING TO SEARCH FOR DETENTE AND DISARMAMENT; NEED FOR CONCERTED FOREIGN POLICY BY EEC; NEW-FOUND UNITY AND CONFIDENCE OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY RAW-MATERIAL PRODUCERS; AND INSTABILITY IN MANY COUNTRIES WHERE AGGRESSIVE

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INSTINCTS NORMALLY RELEASED INTERNATIONALLY ARE NOW EXPENDED INTERNALLY (PORTUGAL).

4. OBJECTIVES OF BRITISH POLICY, BOTH POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC, ACCORDING TO MAUDLING, ARE: MAINTENANCE OF PEACE, FREEDOM OF TRADE, AND ACCESS TO RAW MATERIALS AND MARKETS REQUIRED FOR NATIONAL PROSPERITY. AT THE SAME TIME BRITAIN'S INTERESTS SHOULD NOT BE NARROWLY

DEFINED AND MUST TAKE ACCOUNT OF MORAL IMPERATIVES. IN
THIS CONNECTION MAUDLING MENTIONED BRITISH STRONG
FEELINGS ABOUT TREATMENT OF JEWS IN THE SOVIET UNION
WHICH CONSERVATIVE MP'S RAISED RECENTLY IN A MEETING WITH
SOVIET PARLIAMENTARIANS. AT THE SAME TIME BRITAIN MUST
RECOGNIZE THE NEED TO SEEK AGREEMENT
WITH OTHER SYSTEMS,
SOME OF WHICH ARE REPUGNANT ON MORAL OR PHILOSOPHICAL
GROUNDS.

5. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN LABOR AND CONSERVATIVE PARTIES ON
FOREIGN POLICY OFTEN APPEAR TO BE OF DEGREE RATHER THAN
KIND. THERE ARE
ALSO DIFFERENCES BASED ON EMPHASIS, FOR

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EXAMPLE ON DEFENSE MATTERS, WHERE THE CONSERVATIVES HAVE CRITICIZED THE GOVERNMENT, PARTICULARLY ON DEFENSE CUTS IN THE NAVAL FIELD. ON EUROPE, CONSERVATIVES SUPPORTED BRITISH PARTICIPATION IN THE COMMUNITY EARLIER AND MORE CONSISTENTLY THAN DID LABOR. ON HELSINKI, MRS. THATCHER, AS LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION, WAS ABLE TO EMPHASIZE THE DANGERS OF EXCESSIVE OPTIMISM MORE BLUNTLY THAN THE PRIME
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MINISTER WAS ABLE TO DO. WITH HELSINKI BEHIND US, BRITAIN SHOULD NOW CONCENTRATE ON STRENGTHENING NATO AND DEVELOPING THE EEC POLITICALLY AS WELL AS ECONOMICALLY. IN THIS CONNECTION THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY IS NOW STUDYING THE QUESTION OF DIRECT ELECTION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, A CLEAR BUT UNDATED COMMITMENT OF THE TREATY OF ROME. THE EEC SHOULD ALSO BE WORKING ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CONCERTED APPROACH TO FOREIGN POLICY PROBLEMS.

6. THE CONSERVATIVES WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE UN WORKING MORE CLOSELY TO THE PRINCIPLES ON WHICH IT WAS ESTABLISHED, RECOGNIZING THAT IT HAS FALLEN SHORT OF THE IDEALS. ON THE UN TWO SIMPLE TRUTHS MUST BE FACED: THE EXISTENCE AND OPERATION OF DOUBLE STANDARDS IN THE UNITED NATIONS, AND THE PROBLEMS ARISING FROM THE ONE NATION-ONE VOTE PRINCIPLE WHICH STRENGTHEN THE VALIDITY OF THE VETO POWER OF MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL.

7. RE AREAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST (HISTORY, TRADITION OR DIRECT ECONOMIC INTEREST), MAUDLING LISTED THE MIDDLE EAST, THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA. HERE AGAIN DIFFERENCES OF EMPHASIS EXIST BETWEEN CONSERVATIVES AND LABOR. THE LABOR PARTY IS CONSIDERED TO BE MORE PRO-ISRAEL, MORE PRO-GREEK AND ANTI-WHITE GOVERNMENTS IN AFRICA. IN THESE AREAS MAUDLING SAID HE HAD FELT AS OPPOSITION SPOKESMAN IT HIS DUTY TO STRESS THE EXTENT OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION.

8. ON THE MIDDLE EAST, WHICH REMAINS ONE OF THE MOST DANGEROUS AREAS, MAUDLING POINTED TOWARD THE "OVERLAPPING CONFLICTS" (ISRAELI VERSUS ARAB, RIGHT VERSUS LEFT, SOVIET UNION VERSUS UNITED STATES). SINCE THERE ARE

"RIGHTS" ON BOTH SIDES, THE MIDDLE EAST ALSO REPRESENTS A CONFLICT NOT OF RIGHT VERSUS WRONG BUT OF RIGHT VERSUS RIGHT. BRITISH GOVERNMENTS BASE THEIR POLICY ON UN RESOLUTION 242 WHICH CALLS FOR ISRAEL'S RETURN TO 1967 BOUNDARIES WITH COMPENSATION BY AN ARAB RECOGNITION OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL WITH UN OR OTHER EFFECTIVE GUARANTEES. WITHIN THIS CONCEPT A PALESTINIAN STATE "COULD BE ESTABLISHED" ON THE WEST BANK OF THE JORDAN.

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9. RE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN, MAUDLING NOTED SPECIAL BRITISH RESPONSIBILITY IN CYPRUS, AND THE THREAT TO INTEGRITY OF NATO (GREEK REACTION AND TURKISH DISPUTE WITH UNITED STATES). IN CYPRUS ITSELF, ONLY SOLUTION WOULD APPEAR TO DERIVE FROM AGREEMENT BETWEEN TWO CYPRIOT PARTIES.

10. RE SOUTHERN AFRICA, MAUDLING STATED THAT NO ONE IN CONSERVATIVE PARTY HAD DEFENDED CONCEPT OF APARTHEID. MAJORITY RULE IN RHODESIA SEEN AS "INEVITABLE." BRITISH POLICY, WHILE RECOGNIZING REALITY OF ULTIMATE MAJORITY RULE IN RHODESIA, SHOULD BE TO TRY TO BE HELPFUL IN ACHIEVING AGREEMENT FOR TRANSITIONAL PERIOD, INSURING THAT ARRANGEMENTS TO THAT END WOULD HAVE CONFIDENCE OF ALL COMMUNITIES.

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11. MAUDLING ALSO EMPHASIZED SPECIAL POSITION BRITAIN
HOLDS IN COMMONWEALTH. WHILE COMMONWEALTH HAS "MODEST"
ROLE, WORLD WOULD BE POORER IF COMMONWEALTH SYSTEM DIS-
APPEARED.

12. IN CONCLUSION, MAUDLING SAID BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY
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SHOULD NOT BE ABRUPTLY DIVERTED WITH EVERY CHANGE OF
GOVERNMENT SINCE NATIONAL INTERESTS DO NOT CHANGE EXCEPT
IN ADAPTATION TO EXTERNAL CIRCUMSTANCES. PRIMARY FUNC-
TION OF OPPOSITION, THEREFORE, IS TO EXERCISE VIGILANCE,
TO KEEP CRITICAL EYE ON GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE, TO CHIDE
WHEN GOVERNMENT DISPLAYS TARDINESS OR LACK OF VISION, TO
SUGGEST WHEN NEW IDEAS ARE NEEDED, AND OPENLY TO SUPPORT
WHERE SUPPORT IS JUSTIFIED AND NECESSARY.

13. COMMENT: WERE PARLIAMENT IN SESSION AND POLITICAL
NEWS IN ABUNDANCE, MAUDLING'S ARTICLE MIGHT WELL NOT HAVE
SEEN THE LIGHT OF DAY. IT PRESENTS LITTLE NEW INFORMA-
TION AND DOES LITTLE TO DISPEL WIDESPREAD CRITICISM OF
MAUDLING'S EFFECTIVENESS (AND LACK THEREOF) AS SHADOW
SPOKESMAN ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS. WHAT IT DOES PROVIDE IS A
HANDY LISTING OF FOREIGN POLICY QUESTIONS OF INTEREST TO

THE CONSERVATIVES AND A RATIONALIZATION FOR THEIR POLICY OF COOPERATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT ON FOREIGN POLICY QUESTIONS. THE ONLY POSSIBLE CONCLUSION TO DRAW IS THAT, IF AND WHEN THE CONSERVATIVES CHOOSE TO MAKE A CHALLENGE TO THE GOVERNMENT AND FORCE AN ELECTION, IT WON'T BE ON A FOREIGN POLICY QUESTION.

14. THE ARTICLE REFLECTS AS WELL MAUDLING'S LUSTRE-LACKING PERFORMANCE ON THE FRONT BENCH. IT WILL REINFORCE THE VIEWS OF BACK-BENCHERS AND PARTY MEMBERS WHO SAY MAUDLING HAS NOT BEEN A SUCCESS AND SHOULD BE REPLACED IN THE SHUFFLE ON THE FRONT BENCH THEY CONFIDENTLY EXPECT IN THE FALL. OTHER OPINION SOMEWHAT CLOSER TO THE FRONT BENCH IS, HOWEVER, THAT MAUDLING'S ROLE IN THE SHADOW CABINET IS IMPORTANT TO MRS. THATCHER MORE ON THE ECONOMIC SIDE THAN ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS; HE IS CONSIDERED AN IMPORTANT MIDDLE-OF-THE-ROAD SPOKESMAN AGAINST BOTH A STATUTORY INCOMES POLICY AND STRICT MONETARISM. RICHARDSON

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